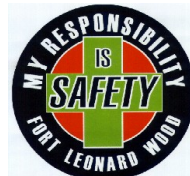


# Safety Alert 05-04

## Cold Weather Injury Prevention



24 Jan 2005

In recent days, Fort Leonard Wood has sustained two cases of cold weather injuries. One injury was due to chilblains, while the other was frostbite. Although neither injury has been serious, these two injuries in a short period of time drive home the importance of ensuring that we have in place and execute thorough cold injury prevention programs. Of particular note is that the second injury involved a failure to ensure that the injured person had been trained on cold injury prevention.

To prevent such accidents, all personnel must exercise personal responsibility:

- Know the types of cold injuries, the signs and symptoms of each, and preventive measures.
- Know and follow all unit policies on cold injury prevention.
- Promptly report any symptoms of possible cold injuries to unit leaders, so the symptoms can be promptly evaluated and, if necessary, treated. It is not being a good soldier to try to "tough it out" when suffering cold injury symptoms. On the contrary, it is being a poor soldier, for not reporting what could result in injury to yourself or others.

Leaders must:

- Conduct proper risk management prior to all training activities, including adjustments for cold weather.
- Ensure that soldiers susceptible to cold weather injury are conspicuously identified, using white tape on the earplug case or right shoulder.
- Seriously consider taking ill soldiers out of training and having them seen on sick call.
- Be familiar with and have in their possession the graphic training aid (GTA) 05-08-012 when training soldiers.
- Ensure that soldiers are issued serviceable, properly fitting clothing and footgear for cold weather and that they are wearing clothing properly.
- Conduct spot checks of soldiers clothes and personal protection.
- Ensure that soldiers change into dry clothing at least daily, and whenever clothing becomes wet, and wash and dry feet and put on dry socks at least twice daily.
- Ensure that soldiers receive adequate nutrition and consume adequate amounts of water.
- Ensure that soldiers use the buddy system for checking each other for possible cold injury symptoms.
- Evacuate cold casualties to GLWACH by the fastest means available.

Commanders must:

- Ensure that they have in place and are enforcing detailed programs for the prevention, treatment and control of heat and cold weather injuries. Programs must include specific policy on training activities that may or may not be conducted during the various wet bulb global temperature (WBGT) indexes/wind chill factors.
- Ensure all personnel are properly trained on cold injury prevention. Ensure that new personnel arriving at the unit are also trained as soon as possible after they arrive.
- Ensure that there is a positive notification system to provide all levels of their organization with timely knowledge of current WBGT index and wind chill factors.
- Discontinue or limit activities/exercise during extreme cold weather. Discontinue outside training when the wind chill factor goes below -10 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Schedule training to fit weather conditions.
- Establish a liberal policy of evacuation of injured personnel to the nearest medical treatment facility.
- Ensure that adequate warm-up facilities, with fire guards, are available whenever outdoor training is conducted during cold weather.
- Ensure that covered vehicles are used for troop transport in cold weather.
- Ensure that warm food and drink is on hand at training sites.

**MANSCEN SAFETY OFFICE**